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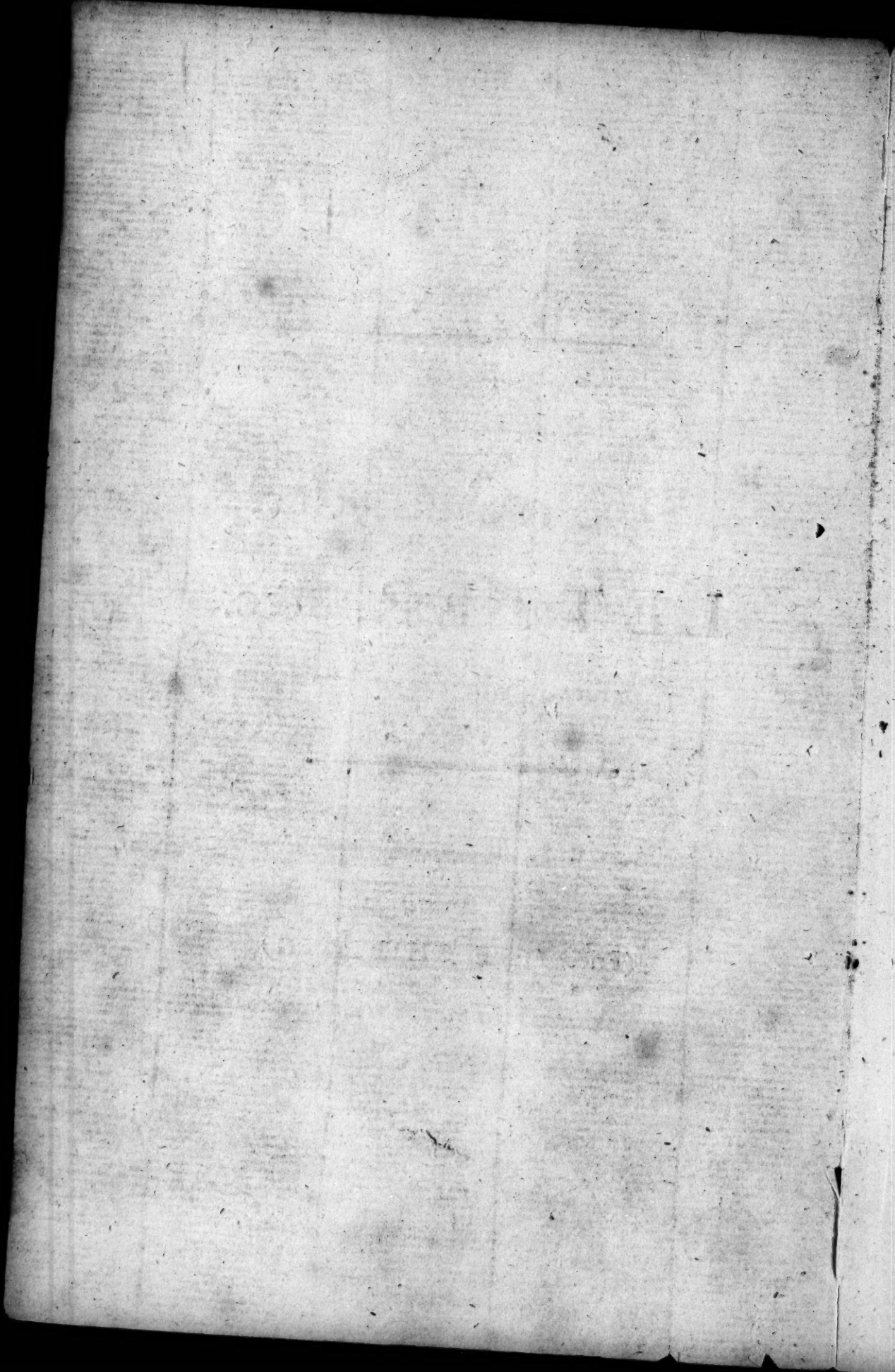
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LETTER, &c.

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(Price ONE SHILLING)



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LETTER

TO

Lieut. Gen. BURGOYNE,

OCCASIONED BY

A Second Edition of his State of the  
EXPEDITION from CANADA.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for G. KEARSLEY, at No. 46, near Serjeants  
Inn, Fleet-Street.

1780.

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U.S. 40

LETTES

The appearance of an advertisement  
announcing a second edition of your  
State of the expansion of Canada, may the  
production be improved. I understand  
that the production had not changed from the period  
of the new edition of the report, which  
I have the honor to acknowledge. The report  
is a valuable work, and I am sure  
it will be of great service to the public.  
I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,  
J. H. P.



LETTER, &c.

S I R,

**T**O the appearance of an advertisement, announcing a second edition of your State of the expedition from Canada, may the present production be attributed. Your first impression had not engaged from the person, who now addresses you, that attention, which it may be thought to deserve. The second raised his curiosity; and, it grieves him to add, has provoked his indignation, at the same time as it has produced his contempt. It is not, indeed, without difficulty, that *he* can bestow ei-

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ther time or attention even on the perusal of political disputes. In justice, however, to your character, it must be confessed, that the subject by you discussed is of importance to this nation. It is in my estimation of such, that I have been induced by it to deviate into the line of political enquiry, and to publish the sentiments that occurred to me upon it. If it is not here entered into so diffusely as in your publication, it is because the writer is led to prefer fact to fable, and argument to bombast. The indignation excited in his breast on the perusal of your pretended defence, did not preclude him from feeling for the disgrace, which, in your person, human nature has undergone. To impute to the criminality of imagined enemies *that*, which you yet endeavour to prove the consequence of inevitable misfortune, gives the final stain to a character, before more than suspected of a blemish.

Your pathetic display of the expedition from Canada, had certainly a claim to the attention of the public. The claim has, perhaps, been more generally allowed, than it may be your interest to have wished. A narration so

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replete with tales of distress, has indeed frequently excited the tear, without convincing the understanding. I sincerely unite with you in lamenting your own and your army's miseries; but we widely differ in assigning their cause.

It is only upon minds unaccustomed or averse to the fatigue of reasoning, that your attempt to exculpate yourself has produced the intended effect. The heart being engaged in your favour, you thought, and perhaps rightly, that the number of those probable to counteract its emotions, by an appeal to the judgment, would be trifling and inconsiderable. A serious address to the understanding, may possibly recall the deluded multitude from their error.

The situation in which you stand to your country, is melancholy and full of distress. Your lamenting it, would have been proper and becoming. But when you drop the language of grief, and adopt that of accusation, you rouse, in the breasts of many, a sensation widely different from that,---due only to your fortunes---pity. Had you contented yourself

with a detail of your sufferings in America, you would have been heard without indignation, and the state, to which your own rashness has reduced you, would, so delineated, have precluded the imprecated vengeance of your country.

The heart, formed to execute a dangerous enterprize, is seldom united to an head for planning a difficult expedition. Equally incapable is such a character of defending his own conduct, or arraigning that of another, by clear and unimpassioned enquiry. The pride of innocence is superior to the meanness of pointed invective. Content with its own exculpation, the cool breast of conscious integrity aims no envenomed weapon at a fictitious adversary. It is the wound rankling in the vitals, which produces the fever of the brain, and drives the tortured wretch to delirious ravings.

These introductory observations cannot be considered as superfluous, when capable of so close an application to the unvaried tenor of your conduct. The wild courage, which actuates General Burgoyne's breast, no man is  
hardy

hardy enough to dispute. That was the consideration, which operated with his Majesty to send you chief in command on the expedition to Albany. But his wisdom suggested, that, to a mind like your's, a precise line should be chalked out, from which the least deviation was to be positively excluded. The tenor of your orders then was, that you should make your way with all possible expedition to Albany. Your arrival there, was to be the sole object of your efforts. In this sense, and in this only, can your orders be said to be positive. It would have been as absurd in you to have submitted to, as in his Majesty to have issued, a strict injunction for your reaching Albany. When its distance from this country, the nature of the regions you was to pass, the number of the enemy probable to oppose your progress, and the uncertainty of your deriving succour from the inhabitants, shall be considered; his Majesty may as consistently be supposed positively to have directed your flight to the moon, as an arrival thro' all possible difficulties at Albany. No head, less frantic than your's, could have formed such a supposition, or have affixed such a meaning to orders,

orders, the terms of which will by no means support it.

But to suspend for a while an investigation of the meaning to be annexed to your instructions ; permit me to observe, that it is my intention to pursue you, with some precision, through your prefatory speech. From that corrected harrangue may be formed no very erroneous idea of your conduct, as an officer, and your integrity, as a man. Little versed as I am in military concerns, it would be as imprudent in *me* to enter into the minutiae of your military manœuvres, as it is unbecoming in *you* to insert in your defence, romantic, not to say imaginary, scenes of private distress. The ground of the expedition, the manner and reason of your progress, and the event probable to be, and really, derived from it, are exhibited in your prefatory speech ; and to this will my observations be almost wholly confined. From these I am greatly deceived, if it shall not appear that your defence is not only inadequate to its purpose, but disgraceful to your cause ; abounding, as it does, with attempts to impose and

and deceive, though at the same time it is replete with contradictions. This charge having been proved against you, it would be an impertinent intrusion on the time of the public to enter more deeply into the merits of your case. Impressed with this idea, it will be my endeavour, as it is my wish, to be much more concise in my observations, than you have been in your detail.

Sensible, as you say you are, that to explain the causes of the disaster at Saratoga, is the principal point, to which your evidence should lead: we yet find you intruding upon the time of the committee and the public, by endeavouring to exculpate yourself for having considered Lord George Germaine as your patron and your friend, and likewise to free yourself from a charge of having attempted to supplant Sir Guy Carleton in the command of the northern army. The disgrace to your character is, not that you ever considered that noble Lord as your friend and your patron (for such he certainly was), but that your conduct has been such, as to give him just cause to be your enemy.

my. The foundation of your friendships is in general well understood---witness the many you have sacrificed during the course of your life---witness the various parties, with which you have been connected ; the various connections, which, from motives of avarice or ambition, you have been at all times ready to renounce. Blush, if it be possible, that you have mentioned friendship or integrity, when Junius shall be brought to your recollection. --- “ Governor Burgoyne, relieved from the apprehensions of refunding the money, sits down, “ for the remainder of his life, *infamous and contented*”.\* Foreseeing, as that animated writer did, many events, it did not, however, occur to his mind, that it was possible for rapacity itself to covet, or the most unbridled assurance to request, an addition to the favors and emoluments which had been so copiously showered on your head. Happy for this country had the *whole* of Junius’s prediction been confirmed by experience. Governor Burgoyne did not, *does not*, alas ! sit down *contented*.

Your denial of an endeavour to take from  
 Sir

\* Vide Woodfall’s edition of Junius’s letters, vol. 2d, page 67.

Sir Guy Carleton the command of the northern army, is the most convincing proof that your mind, hardened as it may be, is conscious of a want of candor towards that man. As a defence, arising from your self-accusation, it may not be improper to examine it. Exclusive of the letter, to which we are supposed to refer for a proof of this charge; what does the whole extract of that of February the 28th, 1777, indicate, but a desire and an expectation that "to an officer of a sanguine temper" (meaning yourself, no doubt), the conduct of the intended campaign may be trusted? In what pursuit, mentioned in your letter of January the 1, 1777, do you desire the patronage of Lord George Germaine, but in that of "an active employment in the expedition from Canada"? The letter from Lord George Germaine, dated August the 22, 1776, † serves but to prove, that, in the *then* situation of affairs, Sir Guy Carleton was to proceed with the army but to the frontiers of Canada. It was

† For these letters and extracts, I need not refer you to your appendix to the State of the Expedition from Canada.

then determined that he should remain there to restore good order and legal government in the province. That end having been obtained, Sir Guy Carleton might, and probably would, have had the entire command of the northern army; but for the zeal, activity and management of the general at home, to whom it was unfortunately entrusted. But allowing that in this one instance you have not acted disengenuously, it is assuming but a negative merit, which by characters unblemished is held in no estimation. It may, however, be proper to observe, that this charge was never even insinuated by Lord George Germaine or his friends. Conscience here seems to have been the only accuser.

The grand question, upon which we are at issue, you have pretended to discuss in your prefatory speech. Had it been a speech delivered in the House, and uncorrected by the pen, its inaccuracies and contradictions may not have been matter of surprize. But we are not in its present state to consider it as an hasty oration, but as a deliberate and corrected treatise upon the

nature and construction of orders in general, as well as of the orders given to you in particular. As such, it is my intention to comment on it. --- Whatever may have been the supposition of the House, or of the People, relative to the origin or terms of the orders in question, it would have been improper and inconsistent in the noble Lord alluded to either to have altered or confirmed their ideas of them in your absence. He declared, with the genuine spirit and feelings of a man, zealous for the honor of others, as well as for his own, that he would by no means enter into the merits or misconduct of any party, concerned in that transaction, until all the parties should be present in their defence. This conduct he adopted: and it could never have been alledged against him, as an imputation on his character, but by the desperate tongue of factious, because disappointed, ambition.

I have already told you, and must in this place repeat the observation, that to a man of your sanguine temper, a direct line, invariably to be pursued, was, upon every principle of policy and prudence, to be marked out. No latitude,

tude, therefore, was given you to alter the object of your expedition; but it was positively enjoined you to make your arrival at Albany, the unvaried point, to which all your exertions should tend. The attainment of this end was to be your grand pursuit, "of which you was never to lose sight." But it did not appear upon your orders, that you was to proceed in opposition to every difficulty and every danger, possible to be thrown in your way: nor could it be reasonably supposed that you would pursue, without caution, without information with respect to the state of the country, and the number of the enemy, or indeed without orders from General Howe, to the sacrifice of select troops, of known bravery, and enured to toil. Was it possible to think that these chosen veterans were the designed victims of the expedition they were sent upon? There is no expression in the orders to warrant the supposition. There is no human principle to justify the practice.

So far was it from his Majesty's intention to sacrifice these troops, that he directs you,  
 "until

“ until you shall have received orders from Sir  
 “ William Howe, to act as exigencies may re-  
 “ quire, and in such a manner as you may judge  
 “ most proper for making an impression on the  
 “ rebels and bringing them to obedience; but  
 “ in so doing never to lose sight of the in-  
 “ tended junction with Sir William Howe.”

Nothing but the simplicity of ignorance could induce men to believe, or the audacity of impudence to assert, that this clause is not a saving one. No terms can be more apt, none more strong, than those of your instructions to convey the design of the expedition; the grand object of which was an arrival at Albany, to be followed almost of course by a junction with Sir William Howe. To this explicit declaration of the purpose of the expedition was added a positive order, not to press on with precipitation, till some intelligence and instructions from Sir William Howe should warrant the utmost alacrity and vigor. Till such information should arrive, desperate, and even dangerous, situations were to be avoided. Your army, General Burgoyne, as you must well know, was meant to strengthen Sir William Howe, by  
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its own proper force, and not by any means, even casually, to be lost to the British empire, in a country so distant, and where numbers are so requisite.

Plain, however, as these orders, plain as the saving clause, may appear, it has, sir, been either your misfortune or your fault to misconstrue both. Upon the latter you have expressed yourself with a confusion, little to be expected in a publication, so deliberate and so revised as your's has been. In the fourth page of your prefatory speech you say, " I do not wish, when it can be avoided, to enforce or reiterate the charges of duplicity and treachery which must ensue, if that clause (meaning the saving one above quoted) " can have any reference to any conduct previous to my arrival at Albany". This clause then, upon the above construction of it, is by you supposed to have no relation to any thing, which could happen before your arrival at Albany. In a sentence, however, almost immediately following, we are told by you, " That clause evidently related not to my forcing, or not forcing my way to Albany, the place of my destination,

"nation, but to such collateral and eventual  
 "operations as might be adviseable in the  
 "course of my march". So that a clause,  
 which you interpret as having no referenceto any  
 thing, which could happen before your arrival  
 at Albany, is likewise construed by you to relate  
 to such collateral and eventual operations, as  
 might be adviseable in the course of your  
 march there\*. Is it possible for human imagi-  
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\* It may be matter of curious enquiry to consider,  
 whether the Bennington expedition is to be ranked in the  
 number of collateral and eventual operations. It is by  
 the General himself termed an *expedition*, in contradis-  
 tinction, it may well be imagined, to those trifling *excur-  
 sions*, which are generally made by small bodies, detached  
 in the course of a march, at a few miles distance from the  
 main army, at all times prepared for, and secure of, a re-  
 treat, or, in case of necessity, easily to be supported by all  
 the forces.---The troops sent, or, if the expression be  
 more proper, detached from the main body to Benning-  
 ton, are ordered in great numbers, to a great distance, and  
 are seperated from the grand army by a country with dif-  
 ficulty passable.---Parties, usually sent upon *excursions*, are  
 not such, as, if lost or destroyed, would ruin, or even ma-  
 terially weaken the principal body.---The loss of the de-  
 tachment to Bennington, is on all hands allowed to have  
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nation to frame two sentences more strongly repugnant to each other than those quoted from your speech? Yet, confused as you appear to be in determining upon the sense of orders, you are, it seems, to be the man, who is to dictate to his Majesty and his Ministers what constructions are to be annexed to their words. Look again at your publication, and blush that it should ever have been produced.

Strange as such contradictions may at first view appear, yet, when coolly considered, they will not

been fatal to the strength of the army from which it was detached.---Yet the General, who orders this numerous body from rather a scanty army, affects to suppose that he was precluded from any *discretionary* conduct. It is true he afterwards confesses that it was left to him to determine on such collateral and eventual operations, as should be advisable in the course of his march. But exclusive of the contradiction involved in this double construction of the same orders, the idea to be annexed to collateral and eventual operations, cannot, by any means, be made to extend to the disastrous Bennington expedition. I have not thought it to the present purpose to insist upon the evident impolicy of selecting, for the march to Bennington, the only troops in the army unacquainted with the language of the country, and almost the only ones ignorant of the country itself.

not continue to be matter of great astonishment. Eager to justify a conduct, so ruinous as your's has been, you have tried every possible means to effect the purpose. The self-approving mind disdains to torture the invention; nor is it reduced to the necessity of adapting words to meanings, which they will not support; or of affixing to the same clause a double sense. This expedient may be attempted to reconcile a conduct replete with contradictions. Fortunately indeed for justice, guilt and confusion are seldom to be separated.

In this, sir, I profess to agree with you, that it is possible for orders to be so absolute and decisive, as to exclude, even in the utmost extremity, an attempt to retreat, and that there are situations, in which it is the duty of a military character implicitly to obey them. But it would as ill become an officer, acting under such directions, to *surrender* as to *retreat*. Resistance, in a case like this, being an act of desperation, ought to be continued to the complete destruction of one of the contending parties. Such

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probably (for your valor I mean not to dispute) would have been the dreadful event, had the first instructions, you mention to have received from Count La Lippe, remained unqualified or uncontradicted. By them you was strictly enjoined to maintain a particular post against any numbers and to the last man. Here are words as strong and positive as words can be, and in the field they must be obeyed. But will it be said that those orders are conveyed on the same or a similar occasion, in the same or similar terms with these, now the subject of contention? Will it be said that the expedition from Canada was esteemed of so desperate a complexion? Do you even venture to assert that such was your supposition of it? If so; it is unfortunate for the assertion, that many letters, written by yourself, stand upon record to contradict it.

The object of your expedition from Canada, was an arrival at Albany, and a junction with Sir William Howe. The object of Count La Lippe, in his orders to you, was to prevent, if possible; if not, to retard, as long as he could, the enemy from passing a particular post. In  
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the former case, you had the command of a great and distant expedition. In the latter you was in the field under the immediate direction and controul of a superior-officer. In that it was optional in you either to have refused or accepted the command. In this you dared not disobey. The one was the case of an offensive expedition, promising in appearance, and fruitful in hope. The other that of a desperate situation in the field.

The first orders you state, as having received from Count La Lippe, were strongly decisive as to your resistance of the enemy, and equally excluding an endeavour, in any extremity, to retreat. Had you been left to act under those injunctions, it would have been your duty to have disputed the pass of the Tagus even to the last man. It is needless to observe, how fortunate it might have been for this country, had those orders been literally executed. Qualifying, however, if not contradictory, instructions afterwards arrived, (notwithstanding all timely communication is by you said to have been impossible), and by them you was enjoined, in every event, to secure the cavalry, and, in the

last extremity, to abandon the camp, cannon, &c. and throw yourself into the mountains. The orders, then, from Count La Lippe, under which you ultimately acted, will not admit of so absolute and peremptory a construction, as it is your interest and your wish they should be made to support. There was, indeed, annexed to them a saving clause, (if it may be so called) as different from the one penned upon the expedition from Canada, as your situation under Count La Lippe was from the command and conduct of a great and distant expedition.— Here permit me to ask, whether, acting under either of the instructions received from Count La Lippe, you would have thought yourself justified *in a surrender of all the troops* entrusted to your command? Would the saving clause, in this instance, have precluded you from censure, or prevented your punishment?

With these remarks on the example you have produced, I shall leave you to the enjoyment of every advantage, possible to be derived from it. Compassion is, I confess, due to your fortunes, nor is it my wish to destroy those feelings,  
which

which this relation might be intended to produce--exhibited, as it probably was, with a view rather to add to the distress of your fable, than to make a serious or rational impresson in your favor. As to supposed cares, it may be observed, that, where destruction is either the object, or almost inevitable consequence of an enterprize, nothing less than terms the most clear and direct, can point out and enforce that purpose.

Coinciding, as I do, with you in opinion, that orders may be so decisive, as to preclude a choice or alternative of acting in the field; it is yet, I trust, in proof, that the instructions, relative to the expedition from Canada, were by no means of that nature or complexion. They directed you to be governed by appearances on the march, and to be by no means precipitate in your measures, till instructions from General Howe should warrant you to proceed with alacrity. So far were your orders from being peremptory, that latitude was given you to act as exigencies might require. Yet such latitude could not be construed to justify your making  
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those large detachments from the main army; the loss or destruction of which must essentially and effectually have weakened the forces under your command.

Having thus investigated how far your instructions may be said to be peremptory and decisive, I shall proceed to examine the general outline of your defence. From that may probably be derived a more just and adequate idea on the subject of discussion, than from any particular phrases or expressions you may have been tempted to use. The military character of a valiant general would lead us to expect from him a particular and decided ground of defence. What then must be our disappointment, when we find an unfortunate soldier, whose clamours for an opportunity to justify his conduct had been repeated and loud, doubtful and at a loss, upon what foundation he shall attempt to exculpate himself? What must be our indignation, when, in the execution of his endeavour, we see him perpetually shifting and varying his ground? From General Burgoyne we might surely have expected a manly and unequivocal  
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justification. Whether our expectations upon this point have been gratified, it needs but little discernment to determine. You roundly assert, that had your orders been discretionary, you would not have acted otherwise than you have done. Yet you refuse to resign whatever advantage your cause may in argument acquire, from the direct and positive tenor of your orders. If appearances in the course of your march were such, as to warrant the measures that were taken; why have you recourse to your orders for a justification of your conduct? Why do you not, doubtful as they may be, at once abandon them? If, on the contrary, your progress to Saratoga was entirely in consequence of your peremptory instructions, why do you not firmly rely upon *them alone* for your exculpation? Why in this case do you labor to prove that the ruin, which has followed, could not be foreseen, and, of course, that it could not be avoided? Why do you assert, that, if your orders had not been positive, you should have crossed the Hudson's river---a step, from which

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the calamity, which ensued, was, after the Bennington expedition, indisputably derived.

Doubtful as you appear to be upon the most eligible mode to be adopted for your defence, there can, however, be no difficulty or hesitation in imputing to you gross and shameful misconduct---a striking instance of which will ever be lamented in the fatal failure at Bennington. It is not, indeed, consistent with my present plan, nor agreeable to my inclination, to enter minutely into the dreadful consequences of a measure, which no man can have the effrontery to say your orders directed, and which, upon your own construction of them, they cannot be supposed even to warrant. There needs no very laborious comment on the policy of that step, to prove its calamitous and destructive tendency. Had it been allowed to the most inveterate of our enemies, to have devised a scheme for the failure of the expedition from Canada; this or a similar one could not but have occurred. From what motives it *was* derived, it is impossible with certainty to say. Cha-  
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rity would incline us to suppose it was an error of the head, rather than of the heart.

It is, indeed, a truth too melancholy to be dwelt upon, that from the Bennington expedition, adopted neither upon the sober principles of reason, nor the established rules of military prudence, may be fairly deduced the disgraceful surrender at Saratoga. Unconnected as this measure appears to have been, and really was, with any orders or instructions from government, it is almost too astonishing to be credited, that his Majesty and his Ministers should be held forth as culpable for a disaster so fatal, and so new to the British arms. The stigma, endeavoured to be thrown on them, will, at length, I trust, be fixed on the person, who deserves it—on that person, who, having wished that the enquiry into his conduct might terminate as did that into his friend's, General Howe, was by no means disappointed in his expectation. You were both the idols of factious worship. From you both did opposition promise to themselves a glorious and a lucrative triumph. They

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were induced, by your mutual commendations of each other, and by your joint execrations of the Ministers, to imagine, that, from heroes in the field, you would become to them protecting heroes in the chapel of St. Stephen. It is true, they found their champions as successful in the senate, as they had been in the field. Their promised triumphs ended in disappointment. The sons of faction, who had exultingly beheld you in their meridian, were at length convinced of your decline. They were no longer animated by your blaze, but with confusion saw you sink hastily to the west, unfelt and unregarded. \* The time is not, I trust, far dis-

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\* The alarming obscurity, I had almost said, contempt, into which one General has sunk, may not unwisely be considered as ominous to his friend. The commander in chief took the lead in his offences---It is but just that he should take the lead in his expiation for them. The wretch, who, in the heat of a well-grounded resentment, has deprived *one* man, perhaps a villain, of existence, must in public suffer an hasty and ignominious execution: whilst he, who, from motives of avarice or from wantonness, has been riotously lavish of the blood

tant, when, if you shall ever rise into notice, it will only be to receive the curses of a people, who, under your baneful influence, have been deceived, insulted, and injured.

Harsh as these observations may to you appear, they are such as have occurred, on your prefatory speech, to a mind unbiassed by party, and uninfluenced by power. They will, I am almost persuaded, have little weight with an understanding like your's: but if they shall serve to convince, as I doubt not but in some measure they may, the candid and impartial, that to the misfortune of having lost an army, you have added the crime of wilful and unjust accusation; the purpose of this writer will

blood of thousands, is frequently permitted to pass unpunished---except indeed by those conscientious pangs, which to a mind that feels must be exquisitely severe. May the poignant censures of an enraged people drive more than *one* General to retirement and repentance! In this situation they may be enabled, by a pious and well-regulated life, in some measure to atone to the Deity for the enormity of their offences: but it is not, I fear, in their frail power to make compensation to their country for the blood and treasure, of which they are said to have been so daringly and beyond example profuse.

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will not be entirely unaccomplished. His mind will, in all events, receive a secret satisfaction, in having attempted to defend innocence from the imputation of guilt, and in having affixed to guilt the infamy it deserves.

**F I N I S.**